

Dear Members of the Human Services Committee of the Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Rosalba Orrego. I am a resident of West Haven and an immigrant.

I am in support of S.B. 284: AN ACT INCREASING THE AGE FROM EIGHT TO EIGHTEEN YEARS OLD FOR A PERSON ELIGIBLE BY INCOME TO OBTAIN HEALTH CARE REGARDLESS OF IMMIGRATION STATUS. Expanding access to HUSKY to age 18, regardless of immigration status, is an important step in ensuring that our immigrant community has access to the health care we need. But our work does not end with expanding access to age 18; we need to open access to HUSKY and healthcare to all immigrants of any age, including parents and adults.

I currently live with my daughter who is 41 years old and I depend on her. Initially when I arrived from Colombia, I had the good fortune to receive information about the free clinic in New Haven. For that reason, it was not difficult for me to receive medical treatment. But I know many families who have not had the same luck. For example, I have an acquaintance who had a bleeding ulcer. Because he didn't have insurance, he didn't go to the emergency room. When he finally went to the hospital, it was a little late because he was in such bad shape. Having access to health insurance would be a huge benefit to the immigrant community.

Another thing that happens and why this bill would be a huge benefit is that parents would stop self-medicating their children. Many times because they don't have insurance, parents self-medicate their children and give them other medications that are not the best and they end up getting sicker. For example, many times children get stomach aches and vomit and it turns out that the child ends up worse than he/she was.

Another benefit of this bill would be the confidence that this can produce in the parents. This bill would let them have an assurance that their children are protected and that they can take them to the doctor when they need to. This can help them to be calmer.

I support SB 284 and ask the committee to support and pass this legislation. Moving forward, I ask the committee to work to open access to all immigrants, regardless of age.